



Your People – Your Most Critical Resource

By Suzanne Healy

“Good morning. Today we have you scheduled for a budget meeting with the finance department; a director’s meeting to outline possible budget cuts; lunch with the business officer; and the custodial unit would like an hour of your time as well. Then we should probably review your schedule for the week, as I understand there may be an impromptu meeting with the President regarding a public relations matter and some finance issues.”

“Ok – let me get my coat off, turn on my computer, grab some coffee. I will be right back and we can touch base.”

You walk into your office and close the door, drop your briefcase in your chair and look out the window where you see the vast acres of the campus and students milling about. You take a deep breath and start to wonder which drawer the aspirin is in.

It’s 8:15 a.m. and already you are thinking – what a day this will be

For today’s senior facilities professional many mornings start like this, and even more seem to be starting this way lately. But take a step back. You have been a senior professional in tough times before, and you know it doesn’t last forever. Think about how to lighten your load, keep your institution heading in the right direction and be able to balance the demands in these tough economic times.

You know that as a senior facility professional it is critical to have a team who can function in situations such as the ones we are in – constant cutbacks, staff elimination, growing enrollments, etc. – because this is the very hard reality for our members at this moment in history. How can you prepare your team to be the best it can be? Answer: You invest in their professional development. Now, like at no

other time, we must take the leap of faith and spend on behalf of the institution. This is no time to pinch pennies!

The professional development of any individual must be as customizable as the individuals themselves. With that said, you are in a perfect position as a member of APPA, and your respective region.

REGIONAL ANNUAL MEETINGS ARE SUCCESSFUL IN PART DUE TO THE SUPPORT OF MANY OF THEIR LOCAL BUSINESS PARTNERS, WHO ARE ABLE TO SUPPLEMENT MUCH OF THE COSTS.

Between these two partnering entities, offerings are abundant for any professional and financial level.

As you know, APPA comprises six regions: CAPP, ERAPP, MAPPA, PCAPP, RMA, and SRAPP. Each of these regions offers an annual event that provides the type of training that is both local and technical in nature. It is at these gatherings that our new staff members can see just how the organization can best support them as they begin their path. These annual programs are created and executed by a dedicated group of professionals who have assessed the needs of their constituents in a way that only a regional event could. These events are often centered on possible regional governmental matters, technical training that is prudent to their location, or other topics. Regional annual meetings are successful in part due to the support of many of their local business partners,

who are able to supplement much of the costs. This allows for a registration fee that is affordable to institutions – who are in turn able to send more than one individual from their team to attend.

Additionally, your regional communities have supplemental resources such as drive-in workshops, lending libraries, and training networks. These programs that are most notably executed by CAPP, ERAPP and MAPPA often provide opportunities to attend national or international training programming.

Then, as your international organization of choice, APPA provides an array of offerings for professional development (of which a number are customizable, allowing for local/campus delivery.) It is our core mission to provide the next level of training and development that allows you to make the investment in your most critical resource – your people!

Supervisor’s Toolkit: Nuts and Bolts of Facilities Supervisors is a program that answers the needs of the workplace that has been transformed in recent years by a variety of forces. Intense competition, advancing technology, changing values, and a global economy have created new possibilities as well as challenges. This transformation is changing the nature of management and the roles of supervisors. Our supervisors must develop a systematic approach toward organizing, managing, motivating, and meeting customer expectations. The traditional role of the supervisor/manager is no longer adequate. The new business environment demands leadership. This week-long program is now available at your campus. Our pool of qualified trainers has grown in recent years and schedul-

ing can be done to accommodate any situation. The program has taken off in a direction we would never have imagined, as it is perceived to be as critical for new supervisors and extremely beneficial to supervisors who have been in the ranks for many years—but are looking for new ways to connect with the changing demographics of the team.

The **Institute for Facilities Management** which is offered twice a year, is the cornerstone of our professional development offerings. Participants in these programs will be exposed to the APPA Body of Knowledge (BOK) that is based in general administration, maintenance & operations, energy & utilities, and planning, design & construction. The value of the Institute goes beyond the classroom, and networking opportunities at this event are perceived as critical as the classroom hours themselves. Each of our six regions supports the program by the issuance of scholarships. For additional information on how to submit for these valuable assistances, visit your region's website.

The **Leadership Academy** has been developed for, and focuses on, the educational institution's administrative professionals. These include facilities staff, buyers/purchasing agents, business/finance professionals, and auxiliary services professionals. The program is designed in tracks, with each track emphasizing a different perspective and type of leadership skill. The purpose of the Leadership Academy is to enhance and further develop leadership throughout the educational industry. The Leadership Academy provides opportunities for professionals to increase their awareness of industry issues, to learn the skills necessary to handle today's changes, and to discover the leadership potential within each of us. Your regions also support this program via scholarships. In addition, APPA is able to offer Track I & Track II of this program locally at your campus. This in turn provides you the opportunity for true team development at your time and place of choice.

The **annual meeting** provides a look at current trends, best practices, and the future of facilities, offering sessions to challenge, motivate, and transform you and your facilities operations. Each year, this event attracts internationally known speakers and features a Hall of Re-

sources, showcasing the latest products and services in the industry from APPA's Business Partners. This offering allows us to partner with our sister associations as well to provide you a one-stop shop for the gathering of information necessary to be prepared for the changing future.

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The **Educational Facilities Professional Credential (EFP)** and the **Certified Educational Facilities Professional (CEFP)** program establishes a standard for professional practice in the field of education facilities management. Through this process, individuals may be identified and recognized for their professional competence in facilities management, especially in those areas unique to the academic environment. Both credentialing and certification will help assure educational institutions of the caliber of their facilities professionals, whose role as stewards of campus physical assets are so critical to the long-term success of the institution. Furthermore, this program serves as an impetus for a professional's development among facilities professionals and will enhance their professional standing within the profession. In an era where confirmation of professional value is

critical, investment in the individuals who are the future of our profession must be seen as a critical.

The **webinar offerings/series** that APPA has launched allow for hot topics and critical issues to be presented. Our interactive, 60-minute seminar series (conducted via audio teleconference and the Internet) is hosted by industry experts covering industry hot topics, best practices, and special interests. These webinars provide a convenient and affordable way for busy professionals to acquire continuing education. From the comfort of your own office or conference room, you can access valuable professional development and networking opportunities—without taking time off from work or paying travel expenses!

Mahatma Gandhi once said: "The future depends on what we do in the present." Our present is difficult right now and daunting – this we know. But

in order to ensure the success of our people in the future the time is now to invest in them. Show your team how valuable they are to you and your institution – continue to support their professional development. Your region and APPA are here to support you every step of the way!

"That was the last of your meetings; would you like to review tomorrow's schedule?"

"Yes but first can you find an hour where I can meet with all staff?"

"But we are set for a staff meeting next week."

"Yes – but we need to sit as a team and discuss some scheduling of professional development and training for the coming year." ☹

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